DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 128 116 RC 009 379

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TITLE	Career Orientations of Rural Youth and the Structuring of Ambition: A Comparative Perspective.
REPORT NO	Sem-15
PUB DATE	Aug 76
NOTE	37p.; Paper presented at Seminar 15, "Rural Youth: Human Resource or Human Burden?" of the World Congress of Rural Sociology (4th, Torun, Poland, August 1976)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Attitudes; *Career Planning; *Comparative Analysis; High School Students; Income; *Occupational Choice; Promotion (Occupational); *Rural Youth; Security; Service Occupations; Sex Differences; Social Mobility; Social Services; Socioeconomic Status; Surveys; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS	*Norway; United States; *World Congress of Rural Sociology (4th)

ABSTRACT

Comparing survey responses of U.S. rural youth (1,142 males and 1,148 females) with those of Norwegian rural youth (660 males and 650 females at the comprehensive school level and 237 males and 192 females at the secondary level), youth career orientations were analyzed in terms of career desiderata and sex differentials, social class origins, and career plans. The variables employed were: achievement-advancement; security; work with people; service to society; hard work; and money. The questionnaire included 11 sets of 3 alternatives from which the single most desirable condition was chosen in each set. Results indicated: the sex-role factor accounted for an enormous amount of the observed variability in the patterning of career desiderata among rural youth in both societies and in much the same way; social class origin contributed little to career patterning and the class differential hypothesis was not supported; certain distinctive orientational themes tended to be associated with specified career plans operationalized in status terms, indicating that a general valuational configuration constituted an integral part of the status attainment process (girls were more inclined toward the social aspects of work career and boys toward the extrinsic rewards); in both societies and for both sexes, the service/people theme clearly characterized the orientational pattern of the upwardly mobile. (JC)

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ED128116

FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

NINTH EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

August 9-13, 1976

Torun, Poland

THEME:

The Integrated Development of Human and Natural Resources: The Contribution of Rural Sociology

Seminar 15: Rural Youth: Human Resource or Human Burden?

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CAREER ORIENTATIONS OF RURAL YOUTH AND THE STRUCTURING OF AMBITION: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Fourth World Congress of Rural Sociology
Torun, Poland - August 1976
Seminar Group B: Section 15
Rural Youth

RC009379

CAREER ORIENTATIONS OF RURAL YOUTH AND THE STRUCTURING OF AMBITION: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE[1/]

In recent years there has been an enormous proliferation of studies dealing with the career choosing/career development behavior of young people and, in particular, with the status aspiration/status attainment dimensions of this problem. The burgeoning literature offers many and sundry generalizations, at various levels of practical or theoretical import, along with a number of rather sophisticated, often very elaborate, paradigmatic models of the social mobility process. Much attention has been devoted to specifying and tracing the influence of such variables as class origin, intelligence, race, sex, community context, parental attitudes, and peer group characteristics. (See the extensive bibliography compiled by Kuvlesky and Reynolds, 1970.) However, although it is generally agreed that career orientations or work preferences other than status/achievement concerns also undoubtedly influence the career choosing behavior of young people, only scant attention has been given to that particular line of inquiry. Social stratification theories, of course, occupy center-stage in contemporary sociological thought and it is understandable that the press is toward searching-out those values or motives that are clearly relevant to the social class problem, obviously germane to the process of attaining social mobility, and easily conceptualized as affecting achievement. Nevertheless, it is important, from both a scientific and practical standpoint, to examine (or to reconsider) some of our implicit assumptions about the valuational dimensions associated with the status aspiration/status attainment phenomena and, insofar as possible, to determine empirically the kinds of career orientations that reinforce or facilitate in some way the movement "up" of young people through the various levels of competition and structure of an achievement-oriented society. 4

This paper reports and discusses findings from a study that explores the patterning of occupational career desiderata among rural youth in Norway and the United States. My concern is primarily with the specification of career preferences or orientational themes

that characterize, or are associated with, distinctions based upon sex, social class origins, and educational/occupational status attainment plans. These specifications, empirically derived, may serve as meaningful reference points for further inquiry into the interrelationships between the valuational aspects of the career selection process and the behavioral manifestations of status attainment. As a comparative study, of course, the societal context and system of educational tracking must be taken into account in order to comprehend the meaning of observed variations and to provide a firmer basis for making valid comparisons.

Comparative Perspectives

Although the educational systems of Norway and the United States can be said to have similar functional goals, there are marked differences in organization and in the manner by which young people are sorted-out for higher education. These differences have been noted and discussed elsewhere (Schwarzweller 1973, 1976; Schwarzweller and Lyson 1974). For present purposes, nevertheless, it is useful and perhaps necessary to summarize briefly some of the more relevant points of comparison.

American children normally complete at least twelve years of schooling before they are eligible to consider college or advanced vocational training. This is usually arranged as six or eight years of primary plus six or four years of secondary school.

In Norway, on the other hand, the basic educational track is nine years beginning at age 7 -- six years of elementary (barneskole) plus three years of comprehensive school (ungdomsskole).[2/] The comprehensive school is the basis for admission to all secondary schools in Norway -- whether the gymnas or any of the numerous kinds of vocational and technical schools. Upon completion of the comprehensive school, pupils must take a general examination and those who do well, have followed the gymnas oriented plan in their ninth year, and have made good grades in other subjects not covered by the

exam, may gain admission to the gymnas. At the conclusion of the gymnas experience, now generally a three year program, students take a nationally administered matriculation examination (examin artium) which serves as a major qualifying hurdle for admission to the universities, teachers' training colleges and other institutions of higher education.

Achieved status, of course, is the organizing principle for the system of social mobility in both societies (understandably so, for these societies share certain political, ideological and cultural traditions -- they are industrialized, modernized and structurally similar in many respects). Nevertheless, there are notable differences in how this principle is instituted.

Educational division ("streaming") occurs at an earlier stage in the Norwegian system and, in certain respects, the mechanisms for sorting-out young people for eventual elite status and professional careers are more formalized and based more definitively (i.e., irrevocably) upon prior scholastic performance and standardized testing than in the American case. Students who do not "measure up" or who for one reason or another are not interested in further academic training are encouraged to seek opportunities at the vocational level; there is no marked social stigma associated with choosing a vocational career. But any Norwegian youngster who demonstrates superior academic ability and wants to pursue higher education is, in effect, virtually assured of "sponsorship". Viewed from this perspective, the Norwegian system is organized along notably egalitarian lines.

In the American case, which Turner (1960) describes as a "contest model", structural barriers to upward mobility are not as deliberately formalized and, according to the prevailing American ideology, educational opportunities remain open to all who are willing to devote their energies in that direction. Everyone is presumed to be in the running for scarce goals until the last possible moment and elite status, to use an idiom, is "up

for grabs". Although "tracking" within given levels of schooling (e.g., high school) is evident in many and sundry forms, it is not as deeply institutionalized as in Norway and in most other European societies. Indeed, the American system of selection for higher education -- consistent perhaps with the American emphasis upon mass education and a long history of rapidly expanding educational opportunities -- permits and often appears to invite many youths to go on to college even though they may be less than exceptionally qualified. As a result, academic advancement and career mobility are heavily dependent upon individual motivation to succeed. (This trait is variously expressed and/or manifested as "patience", "persistence", or "dogged determination".) Under a contest system then, aspirations play a vital part in the process of status-attainment and, in order to maintain the necessary momentum to achieve, status aspirations must be reinforced by appropriate supportive configurations of personalized interests, life-style desires, and condition-specifying career orientations.

Such supportive configurations, we may expect, will be more directly involved in the structuring of ambition in the American context than in the Norwegian.[3/]

Research Procedures

The research data are from a cross-cultural project which was designed to achieve a reasonably high degree of comparability at all stages of the research process including selection of study populations, instrument construction, data collection techniques, measurement and coding procedures, and analysis strategies.

Information was obtained (in 1968, 1969, and in 1970) through questionnaires from 2313 graduating seniors in the 21 high schools serving four selected areas of Kentucky and West Virginia and from 1396 students in the terminal classes of the 15 comprehensive schools (ungdomsskole) and 446 students in the terminal classes of the 5 secondary schools (gymnas) serving three selected areas of Norway. The areas were chosen to represent a fairly wide range of rural, socioeconomic circumstances within each society

(including a rural low-income area, a mixed farming-industrialized rural area and a more heavily industrialized rural area). These regional settings are "rural" in an ecological sense; they are comprised of small towns, villages and open-country residences rather than of metropolitan centers and cities. Farming may or may not be an important enterprise; it is not, for example, in the West Virginia coal-field area. Nevertheless, in comparison with the general populations in these two countries, the study populations are more heavily weighted toward rural social origins (Schwarzweller 1973).

Questionnaires were administered in classrooms either by a member of the research staff or by regular school personnel who had been instructed on the correct procedures through meetings with the research directors and school officials. In all cases, information was collected just before a major decision-making point in the educational career track.

In the American case, the dichotomized career choice variables were utilized as indicants of status aspiration -- planning on college, a professional career, and nonmanual work. The Norwegian phase deals with ungdomsskole students and their plans to attend the gymnas, to pursue a profession, and to enter a nonmanual work career, and also with gymnas students and their plans to go to the university and to pursue a professional career (very few gymnas students expect to become manual workers). Each of these variables is tailored to the decision-making options available to youngsters at that particular level of schooling. Although certainly not equivalent in any absolute measurement sense, they are, I submit, useful indicators of the variability of ambition within each cohort.

Social class origin is indicated by father's occupational status (nonmanual-manual). A parallel analysis also was made employing a composite measure of family level of living and father's educational status. (The latter results, consistently supportive of the basic findings, are not reported in the present paper.)

Approach to the Study of Career Orientations

My approach to the study of career orientations leans heavily upon the works of Feather (1975), Kluckhohn (1956), Rokeach (1968, 1973), Rosenberg (1957), and Williams (1968, 1971), and is closely linked with my earlier attempts to research the career orientations of rural youths (Schwarzweller 1959, 1960). Career orientations can be conceived of as particular kinds of (situationally specified) values or value-orientations. Values, of course, must be inferred from behavior -- from what people say and/or from what people do. They are derived constructs which are used to explain, or label, the conceptual criteria people employ as judgment standards when choosing from available alternatives. In formulating an operationally useful definition the key notion is "patterned regularity of choices." Since individuals can indicate or verbally express their conception of a more desirable alternative from among a set of given alternatives, it is possible to infer, from the pattern of choices, the latent valuational criteria influencing the direction of these choices.

To formalize my approach, I borrow William Catton's modification of the well-known Kluckhohn definition: "A value is a conception of the desirable which is implied by a set of preferential responses to symbolic desiderata" (Catton 1959). This specification is consistent with Rokeach's approach which emphasizes that a value is a preference as well as a conception of the desirable (Rokeach 1968). Operationally then, as Feather (1975: 6) points out, "one can define a belief about what is desirable in terms of the preferences or choices that people make when confronted by a set of alternatives, where the alternatives involve a particular mode of conduct or end-state of existence and its opposite, or where the alternatives consist of other values within a value system." When speaking about career orientations, therefore, I mean the empirically measured tendencies to prefer certain kinds of work career conditions or end-states over others. I use the terms career orientations and career desiderata interchangeably; the latter tends to call attention to the abstract nature of the preferences involved.

Six career orientation variables were selected for comparative study: achievement-advancement, security, service to society, work with people, hard work, and money. These constituted a set from which hypothetical choices were to be made; emphasis placed on any one by a respondent as a career choice criterion forced a subsequent deemphasis of others. Thus, each is measured in terms relative to the entire given set; desiderata extraneous to this set, though they may enter into the career-decision making process and influence a youngster's career choice, are excluded from consideration by design.

The six orientation variables were derived from, and their specification is based upon the results of a content analyses of qualitative data obtained from representative groups of students prior to the formulation of a final survey instrument. Through a series of open-ended questions soliciting opinions about the characteristics of ideal work careers, a fairly wide range of orientational categories emerged. For the present inquiry, we included only those that were considered "important" by the pilot study groups (as suggested by frequency distributions) and clearly germane to the problem of career choosing in both societies.[4/] Also, on the assumption that shared symbolism helps assure conceptual equivalency, we sought orientational categories that could be expressed in fairly consistent terms cross-societally.

A series of indicants were formulated for each category from the inventory of responses obtained during the pilot project phase. They were selected to convey in simple, everyday language or colloquialisms the central meaning implicit in the original category reduction. Indicants are reported in Appendix A. In the questionnaire, they were arranged into eleven sets of three alternatives from which the one most desirable condition was to be chosen from each set. Scoring was simple with each checked indicant contributing one point to its category score. For present purposes, the variables were trichotomized on the basis of observed frequency distributions and, as it turned out, the cutting-points for the American and Norwegian versions were identical.

This instrument, then, and the scoring procedures followed, were designed to identify those respondents who, in choosing a work career, would be more inclined toward one or the other of six given orientational alternatives. If a youngster scores "high" on "security", for example, it means that he regards the security aspects of an occupation as being relatively important to him as compared with all other foci in this set. It does not necessarily mean, however, that he considers "security" specifically more important than any other foci in the set. Inferences about a hierarchy of values should be avoided. (The proper use of data generated by this instrument demands a comparative perspective. We may be able to say, for example, that girls are more service-oriented than boys. We must be very cautious, however, if we then attempt to infer that girls are service-oriented).

Findings

Career Desiderata and Sex Differentials

From day of birth, boys and girls tend to be treated differently in terms of what they are taught, what is expected of them, and what roles are prescribed for them by community and societal norms (Maccoby 1966; Simon and Gagnon 1969). These sex distinctions in the basic motif of socialization undoubtedly affect differences in the patterning of career orientations and behavior. In traditional societies, where sex roles are distinctly specified and tendencies toward deviation are kept within manageable bounds by appropriate institutional structures, differences may be relatively sharp and clear. Even in more modernized societies, however, such as the United States and Norway, where occupational differentiation along sex lines and the social mechanisms reinforcing such differentiation have been giving way in the drive for equality, sex distinctions in career patterns persist and merit research attention (despite the fact that, and perhaps especially because we anticipate their becoming more diffuse and blurred). Behavioral

patterns of this kind are affected not only by societal norms which govern the allocation of career opportunities and available alternatives for men and women, but also by societal norms which tend to structure the conditions and socialization experiences from which the desiderata for choice-making emerge. The latter are far more resilient to social reform and change than the former.

Table 1 clearly shows marked differences, by sex, in the patterning of career desiderata among each of the three study populations. Although these data are reported, for convenience, as the percentage of respondents scaled "high" on a specified orientation, comparing median scale scores yields similar results. When region of residence is controlled, the patterns are maintained with only minor variations (Appendix Table B).[5/]

In the selection of work careers, boys in both societies appear far more concerned with security factors, monetary considerations, and advancement opportunities than are girls. An emphasis on extrinsic rewards and the stability of those rewards may reflect the instrumental behavior generally encouraged in young boys (Brim 1960) and normally associated with the male role (Parsons and Bales 1955). Girls, on the other hand, are more inclined toward social-expressive aspects of a work career; i.e., jobs dealing with people and offering some opportunity to provide useful services for others. Thematically, these findings are consistent with previous research observations in the United States (Rosenberg 1957; Schwarzweller 1959 and 1960; Turner 1964; see also the relevant discussion by Boocock 1974: 84-89). That a comparable pattern of sex differences in career desiderata is obtained in the Norwegian situation is especially interesting; it suggests, of course, that the American case is not unique and, indirectly, it also implies that the sex-role factor may affect the structuring of ambition in both societies in much the same way.[6/]

Two levels of schooling must be considered in the Norwegian case. Comparing percentage differences (magnitudes) between the sexes on this series of orientation variables reveals that: 1) the American high school and Norwegian ungdomsskole patterns are

basically analagous; 2) a considerably greater sex difference in security orientation is manifested at the Norwegian ungdomsskole than at the gymnas level (accounted for mainly by the greater security-consciousness of ungdomsskole males); and 3) sex differences in the (combined) service/people theme are similar among the ungdomsskole and gymnas populations although some (complementary) variation is evidenced when each orientation is viewed separately. Gymnas students, of course, are a select group whereas ungdomsskole students represent a total age cohort, as do American high school students. Because the situational ambiguities and career uncertainties confronting an ungdomsskole student are relatively more serious (means goals and status goals, for example, are more closely linked), it is not surprising that level of security orientation shows a marked decrease from the ungdomsskole context to the gymnas, and especially among boys. Taking this structural feature of the Norwegian educational system into account reinforces my conclusion that the association between career desiderata and sex-roles is remarkably similar in these two societies.

Career Desiderata and Social Class Origins

It is generally assumed, and most stratification theories lend credence to these assertions, that family life styles, interactional patterns, valuational criteria, and foci of socialization vary among status groupings. Although contrary research results are often noted with respect to selected elements of the larger issue (Devereux et. al. 1969; Hyman 1953; Kandel and Lesser 1972), the weight of evidence and reasoned argument tends to support the class differential hypothesis (Bronfenbrenner 1961; Della Fave 1974; Kohn 1959 , 1969; Pearlin and Kohn 1966; Sewell and Shah 1968; Wright and Wright 1976). Consequently, we would expect differences in career desiderata -- in emphases as well as in patterns of valuation -- among youth from different social strata. Findings reported in Table 2, however, suggest that class differences, if any, are rather low in magnitude in both societies. Where differences are observed, it

appears that youngsters from working class families are somewhat more concerned about matters of job security, whereas youngsters from white collar class backgrounds are more inclined to emphasize the service/people aspects of a work career. (Parallel findings are obtained when a composite social class indicator, combining father's education and level of living scores, is employed as the independent variable.)

Thus, the class differential hypothesis gains no support; career desiderata, at least as operationally defined and measured here, are little affected by social class origins. This is not to say, however, that career ambition and status attainment are not influenced by class background, nor does it mean that class background is not a determinant of "success values" -- particularly if one infers such values from a respondent's expressed occupational and/or educational expectations, aspirations, wishes, or levels of tolerance (as do, for example, Della Fave 1974; Han 1969; Rodman 1963). Albeit important, the status striving/status attainment issue is not in question. Rather, the inquiry focuses on generalized conceptions of desired work conditions and career prerequisites -- and the findings suggest that "social class origin" (by itself and in unelaborated form) is not a good explanation of observed variations in the orientations of young people toward such work career alternatives. Sex-role differentiation is a far more important factor. Before commenting further, however, let us consider and note the interrelationships between career desiderata and career (status attainment) plans.

Career Desiderata and Career Plans

The career plans of young people (immediately prior to a situation when critical choices must be made) represent "concrete action decisions" in the sense that all of the determinants of behavior are presumed to converge at this point. To be sure, the "plan," rather than being concrete behavior per se, is a verbalized expression of intent and is generally couched as a goal perceived to be attainable and/or a "next step" in the career development process. It may be assumed, nevertheless, that the many factors

affecting the formulation of specific career goals have been taken into account, have exercized their effect, and are reflected in a youngster's statement of intent. Career desiderata -- the valuational standards entering into the choice-making situation -- are one such set of factors that undoubtedly influence the crystallization of specific career plans.[7/]

For research purposes, of course, (normally and in the present study also), career plans are categorized along status dimension lines and treated as indices of ambition, mobility orientations, and/or degree of commitment to "success values". Conceived in these terms, career plans (status attainment orientation) and, career desiderata (orientations other than status attainment) may be regarded as similar kinds of phenomena; i.e., as components of the valuational configuration which serves to guide subsequent career development behavior. Indeed, one also cannot rule-out the possibility that in modern, industrial societies such as the United States and Norway, the patterning of career desiderata is dominated by the success value theme and that variations in this patterning are concomitant with the status attainment concerns of young people (Rosenberg 1957).

While the conceptual issues outlined above are relevant to a proper interpretation of the findings reported below, data limitations do not permit the formulation of a direct, empirically-grounded position on those issues. Current status attainment theories also are notably insensitive to these problems. Hence, my aim here is to explore the matrix of interrelationships between the various career plan and orientational foci and, insofar as possible, to frame my conclusions in view of the implications of alternative conceptualizations.

Table 3 reports the associations between career desiderata and career plans, by sex, for each of the three study populations. When father's occupational status is introduced as a control, only minor disturbances of these basic observations are noted. In order to facilitate the search for conditional effects, contingent associations are reported in Table 4.

In the case of American high school seniors, particularly boys, the service/people and security themes emerge as principle polar types associated with career plans, i.e., status attainment goals. Those planning on (or structurally routed toward) college and/or professional or nonmanual work careers tend to prefer jobs dealing with people and offering an opportunity to perform some useful service; those planning (or drifting toward) lower status careers appear more concerned with the security aspects of a job. This thematic pattern is reasonably consistent with results obtained in an earlier, comparable research (Schwarzweller 1960).

The patterning, however, is more diverse among girls than boys and, on the negative side of the intercorrelation matrix, polarization along security lines is not as sharp. The "advancement" variable, for example, is negatively associated with the career (status) plans of girls, but fails to discriminate for boys. Since the service/people theme so clearly dominates the frame of reference of upwardly mobile girls (and, consequently, appears somewhat outside the realm of interest of girls with lesser ambitions), an orientational diversity manifested at the "other" end of the valuational spectrum is understandable. Indeed, to some extent this diversity may be regarded as an artifact of measurement (a "forced-choice" instrument was employed).[8/] In any event, because of the critical position it occupies in social psychological theories of development (see, for example, Chodak 1973; Meadows 1971), the relative importance of security vis-a-vis other orientational foci, especially among girls, merits future research attention.

The analysis results also pose a more obvious question about the relative importance of advancement concerns in the career choosing/career attainment process. Theoretically, of course, it should emerge as a dominant motif in the valuational configuration and, if one follows the reasoning of McClelland (1961) and others, a rather strong, positive correlation between status plan and achievement interests would be expected. This does not obtain, however. Orientations toward service and people are, from a relative perspective, the more distinctive foci (or rationalizations) of the upwardly mobile. Career plans, then, even though classified along status lines, are not necessarily appropriate or valid

indicants of status-striving concerns or of a conscious commitment to success values. It well may be, as Van Zeyl (1974) suggests, that "achievement values are learned subsequent to the formulation of personal goals" (p. 146). This perspective, that aspirations determine values, is consistent with one line of development in reference-group theory, namely, the "anticipatory socialization" hypothesis (Merton and Kitt 1950; Merton 1968).

The conditional effect of social class origin in the American case, Table 4, is observed mainly with respect to the nonmanual/manual dimension of career choice. Furthermore, the crystallization of career desiderata in line with specified career plans is more characteristic of youngsters from upper than from working class backgrounds; the lower class pattern is less polarized, more diffuse. The service/people theme, for example, receives far more emphasis among upper class youngsters whereas its principle alternative in this valuational matrix, security orientation, receives far more emphasis from working class youngsters. The upwardly mobile, and especially those from upper strata origins, are, and perhaps can afford to be more discriminating in their choice of appropriate rationale for seeking-out work situations that enhance their feelings of self-esteem and self-worth.

In the Norwegian case, the findings are somewhat more difficult to interpret for one must consider two levels of schooling neither of which is directly comparable to the American high school. At the ungdomsskole level, our forced-choice instrument fails to distinguish any noteworthy pattern among boys and only tendencies toward a discernible pattern among girls. Upwardly mobile girls are more inclined to emphasize the people/service theme; this is balanced off mainly by a lesser emphasis on matters of advancement. When social class origin is taken into account, disturbance of the pattern relative to gymnas plan is negligible; with respect to occupational choice, however, some conditional effects are evidenced. A negative linkage between occupational status plan and an orientation toward advancement, and a positive linkage between occupational status plan and an orientation toward working with people emerge among upper

status boys and, in a surprisingly contrary manner, are specified for lower status girls. Essentially, however, the conditional or suppressing effect of social class origin is of minor consequence. In general, then, the basic patterning of relationships between specified career desiderata and career (status) plans is rather weak among Norwegian ungdomsskole students and, viewed from a comparative perspective, far weaker than among American high school seniors.

At the gymnas level, however, a stronger set of relationships is evidenced. In considering the various attributes of an ideal work situation, students who plan to go to a university tend to emphasize the criterion of service (and also, in the case of boys, the chance to work with people); conversely, they are also less security oriented and somewhat less concerned with the advancement potentialities of a job than are those who plan on entering the labor market soon after gymnas. For girls, a basically similar valuational pattern obtains with respect to the occupational choice variable. Boys planning a professional career, however, express a bit more interest in money matters than their less ambitious peers and, as observed also for ungdomsskole boys, the service/people theme fails to discriminate.

Conditional effects of social class origin are especially noteworthy at the gymnas level. A desire to work with people, for example, is more strongly associated with the upward mobility plans of boys from white-collar than from working class backgrounds; relative to their peers, the latter, even if they plan a university career, are far less likely to depreciate the value of job security. For working class boys, security and money considerations emerge as distinguishing interest foci positively associated with professional career plans; such concerns are balanced-off by a lesser emphasis on advancement and hard work. Among girls, the conditional effects of social class origin are revealed mainly with respect to service and, at the other end of the valuational spectrum, materialistic considerations. In particular, it should be noted that the relationship

between plan to go on to a university and a desire to serve is specified for girls from working class backgrounds; these girls, most of whom are considering teaching careers, seem to be somewhat more idealistic than their peers from middle-class origins.

In the Norwegian case, to sum up, a pattern of relationships between career desiderata and career (status) plans, rather obscure (or virtually nonexistent) at the ungdomsskole level, tends to emerge at the gymnas level in a form that is basically not unlike that of the American. Further, from a comparative perspective, these data also suggest that the crystallization of career interests (i.e., anticipatory socialization) occurs earlier and in a more decisively polarized fashion in the American than in the Norwegian case. A plausible explanation for these differences in patterning, as Van Zeyl (1974) argues in his insightful study of the relationships between value orientations and levels of ambition among secondary school students in the Netherlands, undoubtedly must take into account societal differences in the structure of education and in the norms of selection for upward mobility. The American system, for example, resembles a "contest" model (Turner 1960) whereas the Norwegian, much like the British, is clearly organized along "sponsored" lines. "Contest" places a greater premium upon motivation to succeed (i.e., dogged persistence) and, consequently, encourages participants to develop supportive configurations of career interests to serve as stabilizing forces in their quest for success

Concluding Comments

My aim in this paper has been to explore the patterning of occupational career orientations among American and Norwegian rural youths and, within limits imposed by our research design, to determine the extent to which certain factors affect that patterning. Status aspiration, of course, is an important dimension of the career orientation configuration and clearly relevant to the problem of social mobility. For present purposes, however,

I have been more concerned with seeking-out generalized conceptions of desired work conditions and career perquisites other than status attainment per se, that enter into the career selection process; my attention focussed on work preferences that serve as standards or criteria by which young people evaluate available alternatives. A comparative research strategy was employed in specifying and tracing the character and influence of these sundry career desiderata. This enabled me to consider structural differences in the Norwegian and American educational systems and in the norms or selection for upward mobility. My principle objective, here and in earlier research papers from this cross-national project, has been to comprehend the manner and degree by which variations in macro-level societal characteristics affect the structuring of ambition and, consequently, the life chances of rural young people in modern, industrial society. Implicitly, the broader issues are educational reform and human development.

The findings from this study suggest that: 1) the sex-role factor accounts for an enormous amount of the observed variability in the patterning of career desiderata among rural youth in both societies and in much the same way; 2) social class origin contributes little to that patterning and, consequently, the class differential hypothesis gains no support from these findings; and 3) certain distinctive orientational themes tend to be associated with specified career plans operationalized in status terms (the Norwegian ungdomsskole case is a notable exception) and, in that sense, may be conceptualized as bound into a general valuational configuration integral to the status attainment process.

In both the United States and Norway, girls are more inclined toward the social aspects of a work career (serving society and working with people) whereas boys are more concerned with extrinsic rewards (advancement possibilities and financial returns) and with the stability of those rewards (security). This may mean that girls are more idealistic and boys more practical or one might attempt an explanation along the classic "instrumental-expressive" lines. In any event, specified career orientations appear to be woven into the valuational configurations associated with sex-role and undoubtedly have something to

do with the manner by which young men and women view the world of work and their own respective career alternatives. Whether these orientations serve to channel ambitions in directions that are socially constructive and individually self-fulfilling are important questions that cannot be answered here. It is interesting to observe, nevertheless, that the orientational emphases of girls is consistent with that of youngsters who are upwardly mobile.

In both societies and for both sexes, the service/people theme clearly characterizes the orientational pattern of theupwardly mobile. Among youngsters who are not planning on further, formal education and subsequently on upper status occupational careers, the service/people theme tends to be deemphasized in favor of the security or advancement themes. These patterns, to be sure, are much clearer at the Norwegian gymnas than at the ungdomsskole levels. Given the "sponsorship" style structure of the Norwegian educational system, the crystallization and polarization of career desiderata may be relatively premature for ungdomsskole students; they are at a point in their schooling when career opportunities are very heavily dependent upon achieving a strong academic record and gaining entrée to the gymnas or some other type of secondary school. If one takes this into account, the service/people theme emerges as an important focal point of the upwardly mobile in both the American and Norwegian cases.

These findings, then, suggest some interesting possibilities for future research on the orientational concomitants of social mobility aspirations. Career choice and the process of status attainment in modern, industrial societies are rather complex phenomena. Their determinants are located not only in social situational circumstances and the externalities that restrict or expand career opportunities, but also in individual conceptions and beliefs about what is or would be desirable. Those conceptions are learned and internalized and, consequently, also serve to structure the career choosing process without, I might add, the necessity of external constraints or coercive reinforcements. The

orientational configurations associated with specified career plans, therefore, merit further research consideration and the findings reported here offer some guidelines to the central question:

> what are the motivational imperatives and valuational standards that enter into the career selection process and that, over time, lead to the behavioral manifestations of ambition?

NOTES

1. The data reported here were collected through a series of field surveys organized by me in collaboration with a number of people in Norway and the United States. I especially acknowledge and appreciate the help of Donald Bogie and James S. Brown at the University of Kentucky; Thomas Lyson and John Marra at West Virginia University; Helge Solli and Lynne Lackey at the Norges Landbruskshogskole in Vollebek, Norway. In addition, I want to express my appreciation for the guidance and help of Professor Herbert Koetter and Dr.Mathilda Buffen at the Institute fuer Agrarsoziologie, der Justus-Liebig Universitaet, Giessen, Germany; although the German phase is not dealt with in the present paper, it provided a basis for the comparative design and measurement procedures employed and is an integral part of the larger project.

2. Norway's new system of compulsory comprehensive school was initiated by the Primary Schools Act of 1959 which aimed to strengthen rural education and to form a basis for further equalization. The new system has gradually replaced two earlier types of secondary school for the 13 to 16 year age group -- the academically oriented realskole and the vocationally oriented continuation schools (framhaldsskole). Although the more remote rural areas were slower in adopting the "six plus three" system than were the urban centers, it is now the normal organization of compulsory education throughout most of Norway.

3. The term "structuring of ambition" implies a set of conditions external to the individual as, for example, the social constraints upon one's opportunity for advancement and the circumstances from which one's perception of attainable goals and level of ambition derives (Schwarzweller, 1976).

4. The inclusion of any value variable in the research design implies an hypothesis, and justification of the hypothesis is a function of theory, insight and/or scientific speculation. Although sociological literature is profuse in its attention to values as a major component in action systems, a major induction leap must be made from the general to the operational theory which encompasses a particular problem. A further handicap to empirical research is the literature's focus on "dominant values" -- the core values of society which perform an essentially integrative function (Kluckhohn, 1956). To discover the meaningful relationships between values and behavior within a given system of action, such as organization of a society's labor market, and to explain diversities of

interest and behavior which are not necessarily deviant, variant values must be considered. Lacking a useful, middle-range theory of occupations and values from which to derive working hypotheses, one must rely upon sociological reasoning based upon empirically derived insights to guide the development of a research approach that may serve to specify the elements to be included in future theoretical formulations.

5. The American regional areas are: 1) West, a heavily industrialized part-time farming area in western Kentucky; 2) Center, a commercial farming, diversified industrial area in central Kentucky; 3) East, a rural low-income, subsistence farming area in the Appalachian area of eastern Kentucky; and 4) Mingo, a rural low-income, coal mining area in southwestern West Virginia. The Norwegian regional areas are: 1) North, a heavily industrialized, marginal farming area in the Nordland-Narvik region; 2) West, a commercial farming, mixed industry area in the West Hedmark-Hamar region, and 3) East, a rural lower income area in the East Hedmark-Sor Trondelog region near the Swedish border.

6. Although not reported here, comparable data collected from German Volksschule and secondary school students reveal similar patterns of sex differences in career desiderata. These findings, therefore, lead one to conclude that: 1) the sex-role factor is a powerful determinant of the career orientations and goals of rural youth in modern, industrial societies, and 2) its effects transcend national boundaries and, to a considerable extent, overshadow the effects of variations in educational structure and modes of career mobility.

7. I do not wish to suggest a causal sequence at this point. Equally plausible theoretical arguments can be assembled for two sets of causal assumptions regarding the temporal relationships between aspirations (or plans) and career desiderata (or values). My inclination is to posit a reciprocal relationship; hence, I use the term "crystallization". Career desiderata other than status concerns are undoubtedly drawn into the process of "crystallizing" career plans and, through the mechanism of anticipatory socialization, are undoubtedly affected also by the imagery associated with the given career plan model.

8. The measuring instrument demands a choice from a given set of alternatives. The signs and magnitudes of "correlation" indicate the relative affinity of each desideratum to the status dimension (career plan) in question and, of course, relative to all other desiderata in the set.

TABLE 1: Sex differences in career desiderata (percent)

Population	Percent scaled "high" on the specified orientation*					
	Security	Money	Advance	Work	People	Service
American high school						
Males (N=1142)	47.2	36.9	24.2	22.7	21.3	15.6
Females (N=1148)	27.5	19.6	12.0	26.3	43.1	36.3
% difference	(19.7)	(17.3)	(12.2)	(-3.6)	(-21.8)	(-20.7)
Norwegian ungdomsskole						
Males (N=660)	58.3	32.3	23.4	18.3	11.3	12.9
Females (N=650)	37.7	14.7	13.6	25.5	29.2	32.6
% difference	(20.6)	(17.6)	(9.8)	(-7.2)	(-17.9)	(-19.7)
Norwegian gymnas						
Males (N=237)	40.5	30.5	22.6	24.6	20.0	30.2
Females (N=192)	30.9	18.4	8.1	22.1	46.1	43.2
% difference	(9.6)	(12.1)	(14.5)	(2.5)	(-26.1)	(-13.0)

*Career orientation variables are trichotomized

TABLE 2: Gammas showing the relationship between career desiderata and father's occupational status (normanual, manual), by sex

Career desideratum	American high school		Norwegian ungdomsskole		Norwegian gymnas	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Security	-.15	-.13	-.21	+.06	-.17	-.22
Money	+.05	+.01	-.06	-.08	+.07	-.12
Advance	-.03	-.11	+.01	-.07	-.01	+.12
Work	-.09	-.13	+.09	+.02	-.01	+.14
People	+.00	+.13	+.09	+.03	+.14	+.13
Service	+.12	+.17	+.08	+.06	-.01	+.05

TABLE 3: Gammas (zero-order) showing the relationship between career desiderata and career plans, by sex

Population	Career plan*	Career desideratum* Security	Money	Advance	Work	People	Service
American high school							
Males	College	-.36	-.09	-.03	+.06	+.10	+.32
	Profession	-.32	-.18	-.03	+.04	+.17	+.28
	Nonmanual work	-.28	-.19	-.01	+.03	+.13	+.27
Females	College	-.31	-.19	-.27	-.18	+.20	+.44
	Profession	-.22	-.19	-.28	-.21	+.14	+.45
	Nonmanual work	-.37	-.23	-.21	+.09	+.13	+.38
Norwegian ungdomsskole							
Males	Gymnas	-.06	-.01	-.19	-.01	-.02	+.13
	Profession	-.05	+.02	-.03	-.08	-.03	-.02
	Nonmanual work	-.14	+.01	-.05	-.10	+.08	+.09
Females	Gymnas	-.02	-.13	-.12	-.02	+.19	+.17
	Profession	+.14	-.06	-.16	+.03	+.29	-.02
	Nonmanual work	+.16	-.06	-.29	-.19	+.13	+.24
Norwegian gymnas							
Males	University	-.33	+.06	-.19	-.01	+.36	+.27
	Profession	-.00	+.22	-.18	-.15	+.12	+.04
Females	University	-.27	-.07	-.27	+.04	+.06	+.23
	Profession	-.18	-.17	-.18	-.01	-.04	+.25

*Career plan variables are dichotomized; career desideratum variables are trichotomized.
*Gymnas students are unlikely to consider manual work careers (only 22 boys and 2 girls, in this case).

TABLE 4: Gammas (contingent association) showing the relationship between career desiderata and career plans, by sex and father's occupational status

Population	Career plan	Father's status	Career desideratum					
			Security	Money	Advance	Work	People	Service
American high school Males	College	Nonmanual	-.42	-.11	-.08	+.11	+.18	+.38
		Manual	-.34	-.12	-.02	+.09	+.10	+.30
	Profession	Nonmanual	-.32	-.11	-.09	+.09	+.19	+.29
		Manual	-.28	-.23	-.02	+.03	+.16	+.27
	Nonmanual work	Nonmanual	-.47	-.13	-.16	+.12	+.12	+.44
		Manual	-.18	-.23	+.01	+.02	+.14	+.21
American high school Females	College	Nonmanual	-.47	-.28	-.28	-.13	+.33	+.48
		Manual	-.27	-.21	-.23	-.16	+.11	+.42
	Profession	Nonmanual	-.16	-.16	-.24	-.23	+.22	+.37
		Manual	-.23	-.23	-.27	-.17	+.07	+.46
	Nonmanual work	Nonmanual	-.69	-.19	-.01	+.11	+.17	+.46
		Manual	-.31	-.23	-.20	+.07	+.09	+.36

TABLE 4: (continued)

Population	Career plan	Father's status	Career desideratum					
			Security	Money	Advance	Work	People	Service
Norwegian ungdomsskole Males	Gymnas	Nonmanual	+.12	-.01	-.23	-.07	-.06	+.08
		Manual	-.09	+.01	-.16	-.04	-.04	+.17
	Profession	Nonmanual	+.10	+.09	-.22	-.03	-.11	-.05
		Manual	-.06	-.02	+.05	-.15	-.03	+.04
	Nonmanual work	Nonmanual	-.05	-.11	-.24	-.14	+.22	+.10
		Manual	-.09	+.08	+.01	-.14	-.05	+.14
Norwegian ungdomsskole Females	Gymnas	Nonmanual	-.12	-.07	-.13	+.03	+. 0	+.24
		Manual	+.01	-.14	-.10	-.01	+.23	+.13
	Profession	Nonmanual	+.18	+.04	+.06	+.09	+.14	-.17
		Manual	+.09	-.15	-.44	+.02	+.45	+.09
	Nonmanual work	Nonmanual	*	*	*	*	*	*
		Manual	-.03	-.07	-.18	-.18	+.12	+.22
Norwegian gymnas Males	University	Nonmanual	-.48	+.07	-.08	-.01	+.48	+.23
		Manual	-.15	+.05	-.28	-.01	+.24	+.30
	Profession	Nonmanual	-.25	+.11	+.10	+.13	+.30	-.00
		Manual	+.33	+.31	-.35	-.31	-.06	+.02
Norwegian gymnas Females	University	Nonmanual	-.31	+.09	-.27	-.04	+.12	+.13
		Manual	-.24	-.29	-.28	+.15	+.04	+.35
	Profession	Nonmanual	-.19	-.24	-.28	-.08	-.10	+.32
		Manual	-.18	-.15	-.06	+.07	+.08	+.17

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APPENDIX TABLE A: Indicants of occupational career desiderata (scale items)*

Desideratum	AMERICAN	NORWEGIAN
Advancement	good posibility for advancement	gode muligheter for a rykke opp til bedre stillinger
	opportunity to get ahead	muligheter til a komme framover
	possibility of becoming wellkown	muligheter til a bli kjent
	good chance for a successful career	sjanse til a gjore en karriere
	knowing that quick promotions are possible	a vite at raske for fremmeker er mulig
	chance to become recognized as an important person	sjanse til a bli sett pa som en viktig person
Security	good security for the future	god sikkerhet for framtida
	knowing you will have a steady job	a vite at man for en stabil jobb
	certainty of a lifetime employment	sikkerhet for ikke a bli arbeidslos
	being sure you'll not be fired if hard times come	a vaere sikker pa at du ikke blir oppsagt i darlige tider
	a good retirement system and pension plan	en god pensjonsordning
	being certain that your future is secure and you'll never be out of work	a vaere sikker pa at framtida er sikker og at du aldri vil bli uten arbeid
Service to Society	chance to help other people	sjanse til a hjelpe andre mennesker
	doing something useful for society	gjore noe nyttig for samfunnet
	knowing that you're doing work that helps others	a vite at du gjore et arbeide som hjelper andre
	opportunity to do good and serve mankind	anledning til a gjore noe belydningsfullt og a tjene menneskeheten
	opportunity to improve other people's lives	anledning til a forbedre menneskers liv
	contributing something of value to your fellow man	a kunne bidra med noe verdifullt til dine medmennesker

Desideratum	AMERICAN	NORWEGIAN
Work with People	frequent contact with people	hyppig kontakt med mennesker
	meeting many people	a mote mange mennesker
	working around or with people	a fa med mennesker a gjore i arbeidet
	chance to get acquainted with different people	anledning till a bli kjent med forskjellige mennesker
	getting to meet and know lots of people	a vaere i stand til a mote og bli kjent med mange
Hard Work	being able to do a solid day's work	a vaere i stand til a gjore et skikkelig dagsverk
	working hard	arbeide hardt
	chance to take on a task and really work at it	mulighet til a ga los pa en oppgave of virkelig arbeide med den
	really being able to do an honest day's work	a virkelig vaere i stand til a gjore et aerlig dagsverk
	chance to become fully involved in your job and to work hard	sjanse til a bli fullstendig opptatt av arbeidet og a arbeide hardt
Money	making a good income	fa store inntekter
	making lots of money	tjene godt
	making plenty of money for a comfortable living	tjene mye penger for a fore et behagelig liv
	getting paid well for your labor	abli godt betalt
	paying better money than most other jobs	abli bedre betalt enn andre steder

*Note: The Norwegian items are essentially a literal translation of the American. In the final instrument the first three (major) values have six indicants and the latter three (minor) values have five.

APPENDIX TABLE B. Sex differences in career desiderata, by region of residence (percent scaled "high" on specified career orientation).

Career desideratum	Sex	American high school: Regional context: West	Center	East	Mingo
Security	Males	44.8	47.7	42.1	56.1
	Females	25.3	26.0	29.3	30.1
Money	Males	36.3	39.8	38.1	32.2
	Females	18.0	22.0	20.3	17.0
Advance	Males	25.0	24.9	23.9	22.8
	Females	9.4	13.3	13.4	11.0
Work	Males	26.3	18.4	22.2	24.1
	Females	26.3	24.4	27.7	27.4
People	Males	24.3	22.5	20.9	17.0
	Females	51.0	44.2	35.4	42.8
Service	Males	16.4	14.8	17.2	12.8
	Females	41.2	35.7	33.5	35.2
Total N	Males	292	289	325	236
	Females	277	324	311	236

APPENDIX TABLE B (Continued).

Career desideratum	Sex	Norwegian ungdomsskole — Regional context: North	West	East	Norwegian gymnas — Regional context: North	West	East
Security	Males	61.5	54.5	59.6	50.0	31.8	46.3
	Females	38.5	39.2	35.2	39.5	20.0	38.5
Money	Males	30.7	33.9	32.4	44.3	24.8	26.9
	Females	10.4	16.1	17.8	18.6	14.1	23.4
Advance	Males	23.2	24.1	22.4	18.0	25.0	22.7
	Females	10.9	8.9	22.3	13.6	6.5	6.3
Work	Males	23.9	17.1	12.9	16.4	31.1	21.5
	Females	28.6	23.6	24.4	23.3	25.9	16.7
People	Males	9.7	11.5	13.5	24.6	19.4	16.7
	Females	31.5	28.6	27.1	41.9	56.1	36.4
Service	Males	11.4	14.5	12.2	26.7	29.6	34.3
	Females	34.3	33.2	29.4	36.4	50.6	38.5
Total	Males	219	255	178	61	108	66
	Females	213	240	201	44	82	65